COUNTER CULTURE / by THE MARATTAS

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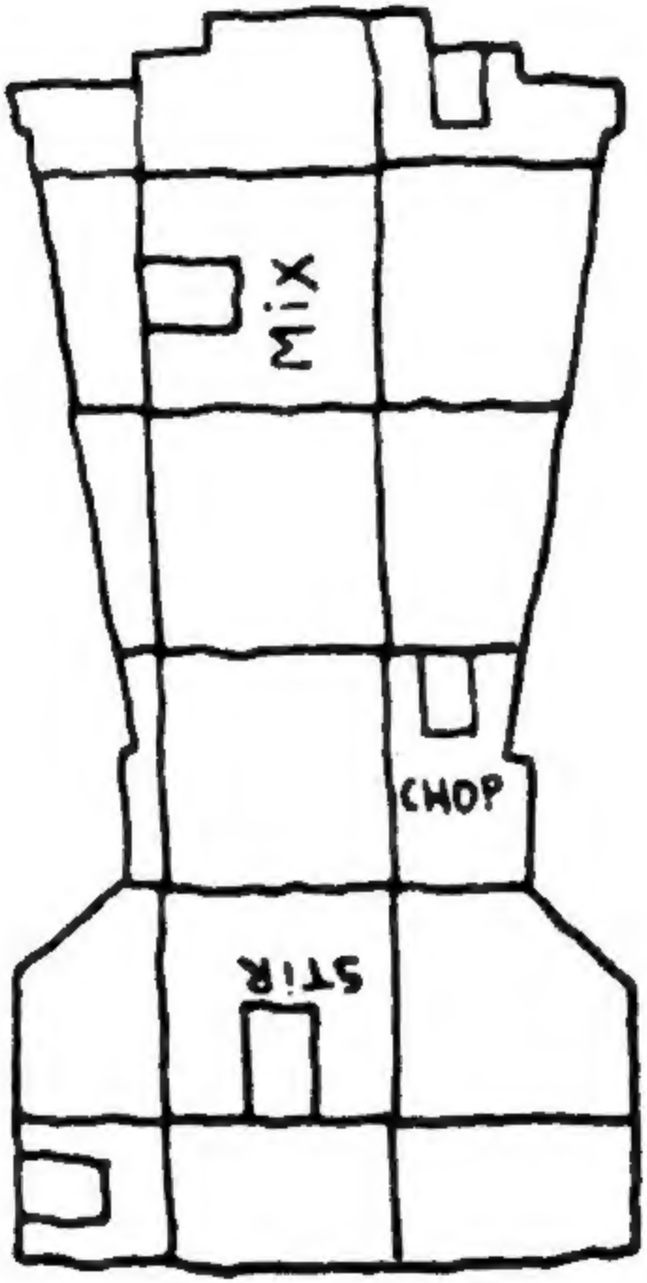

RUBIK'S BLENDER

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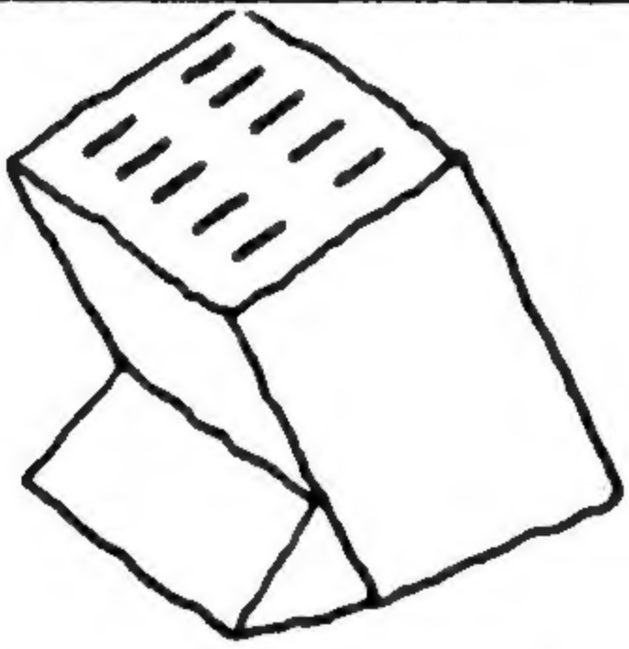
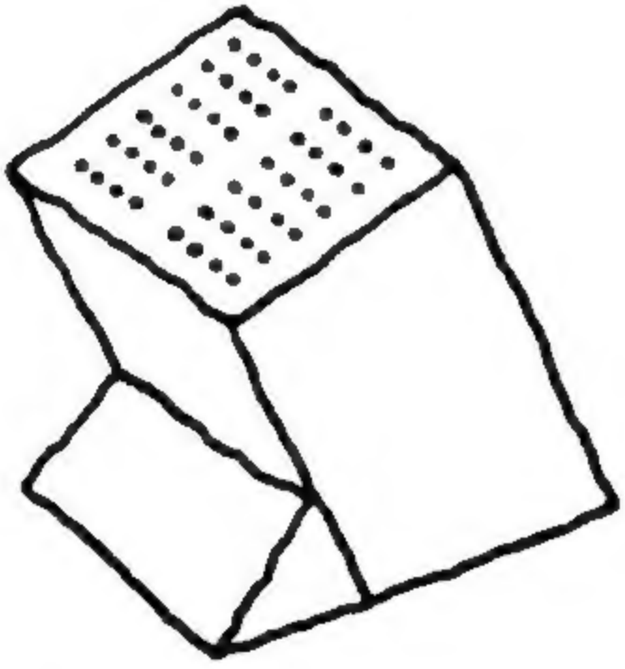


STEAK KNIFE HOLDER



STEAK FORK HOLDER

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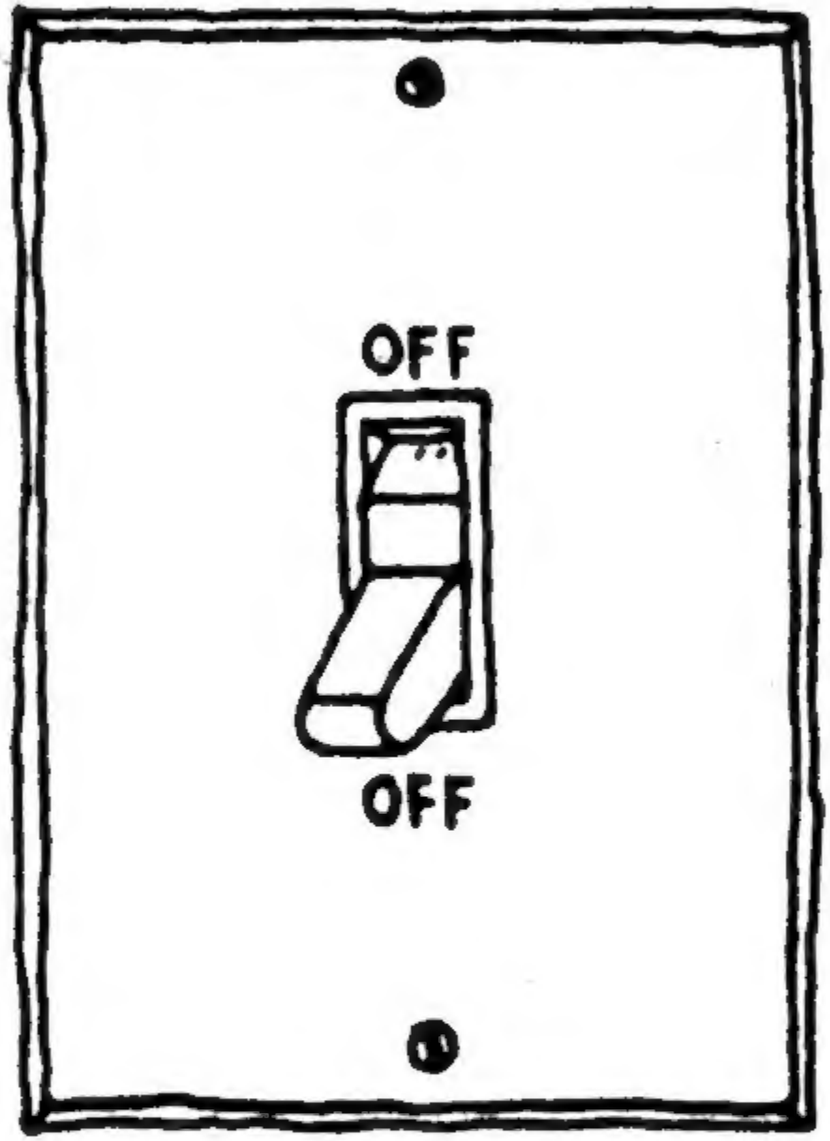

WHAT CAUSED THE DARK AGES

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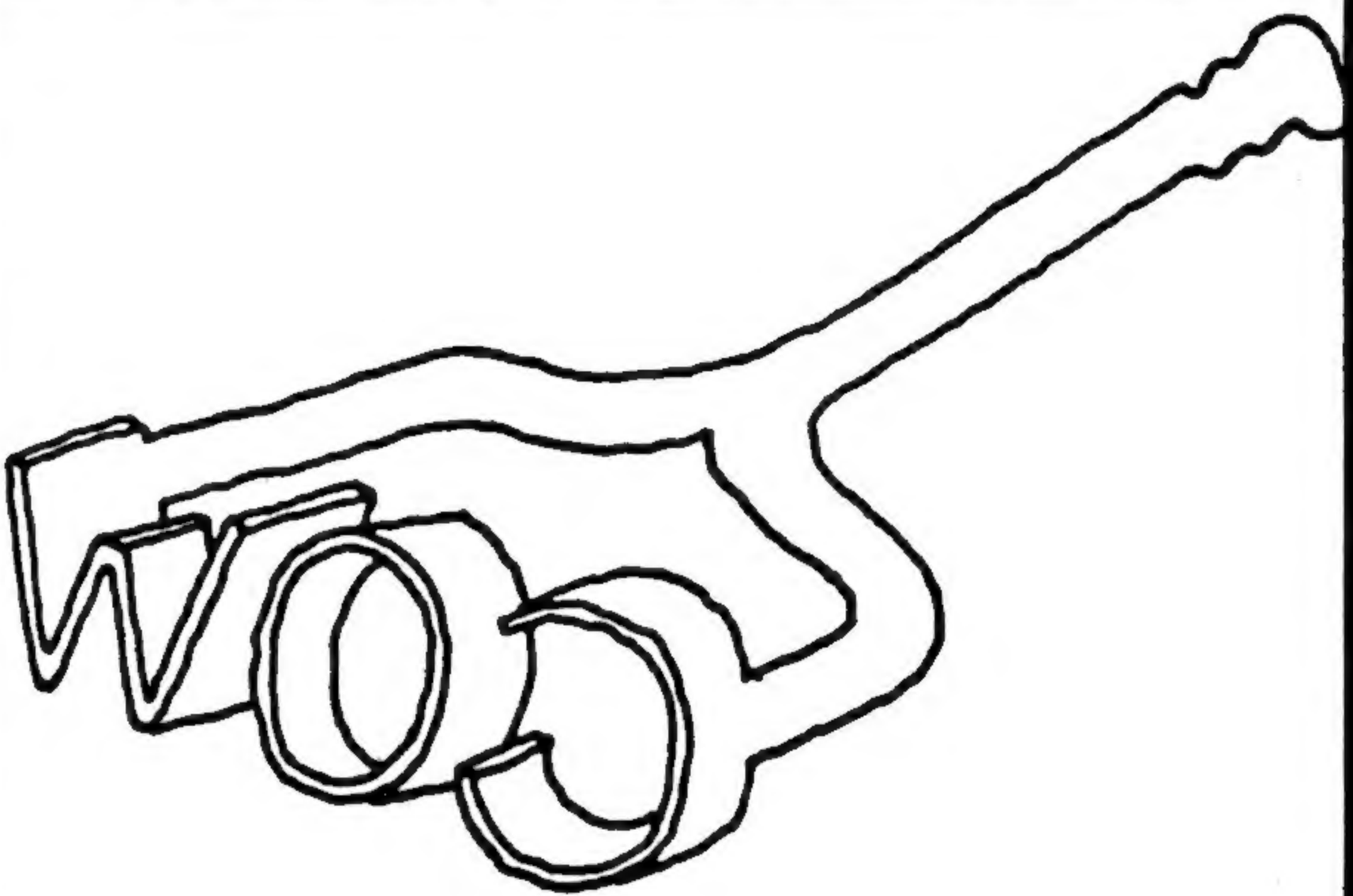

GENERIC BRAND

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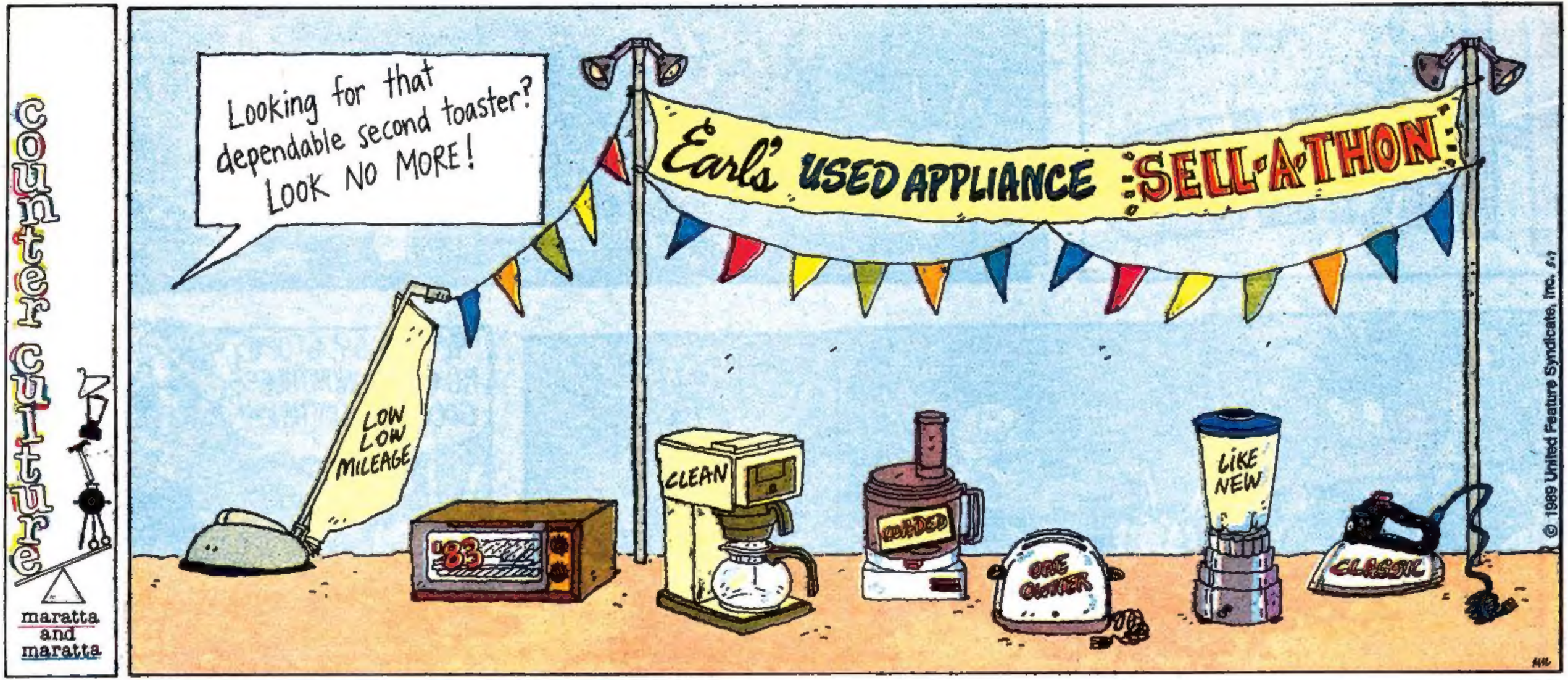
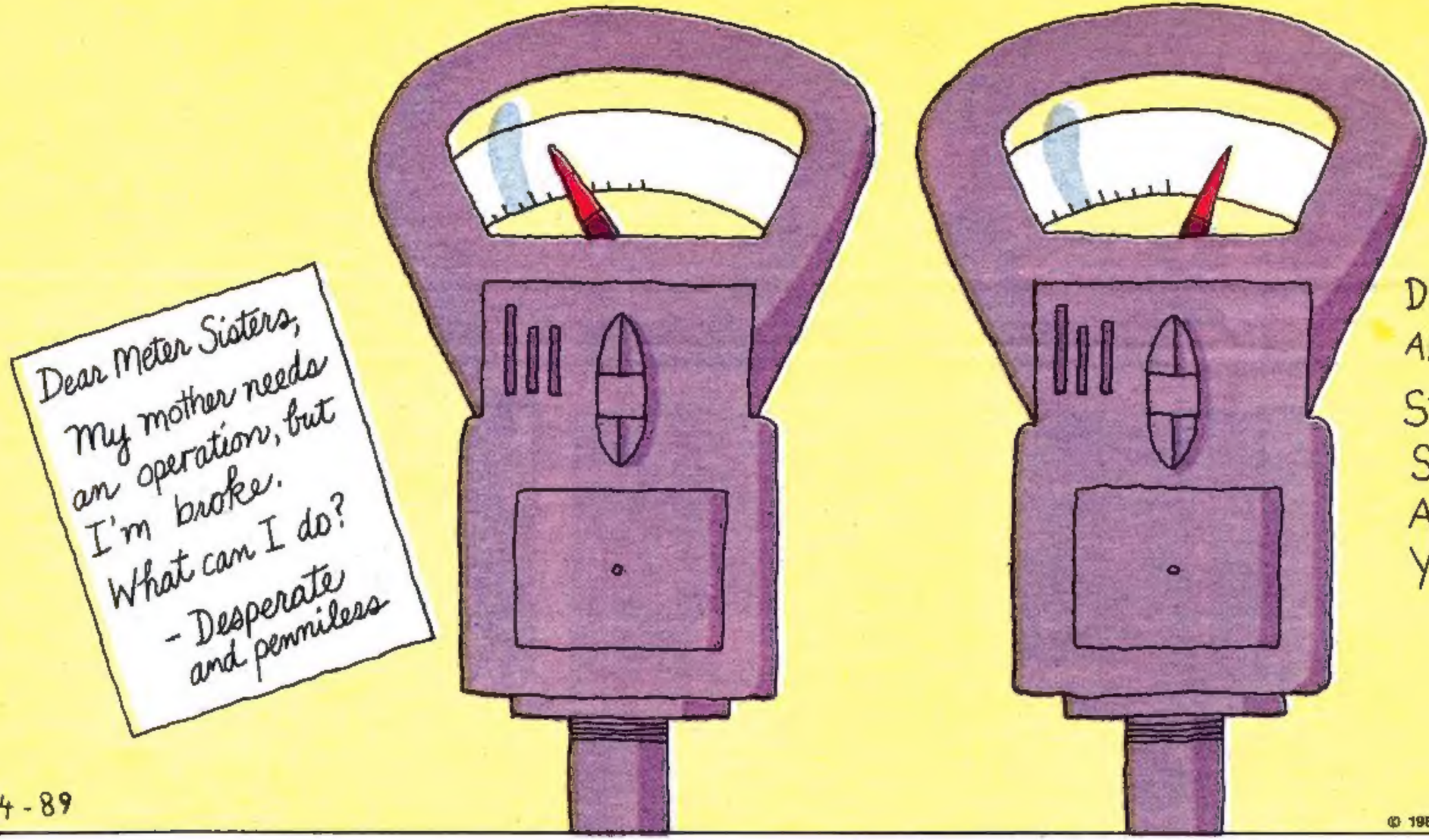

counter culture
maratta and maratta
Looking for that dependable second toaster? Look NO MORE!
Earl's USED APPLIANCE SELL-A-THON
LOW LOW MILEAGE
'83
CLEAN
WORKED
ONE OWNER
LIKE NEW
CLASSIC
© 1989 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.


Dear Meter Sisters,
My mother needs an operation, but I'm broke.
What can I do?
- Desperate and penniless
DEAR DESPERATE AND PENNILESS,
STAND PERFECTLY STILL AND PUT A TIMER ON YOUR HEAD.

5-14-89

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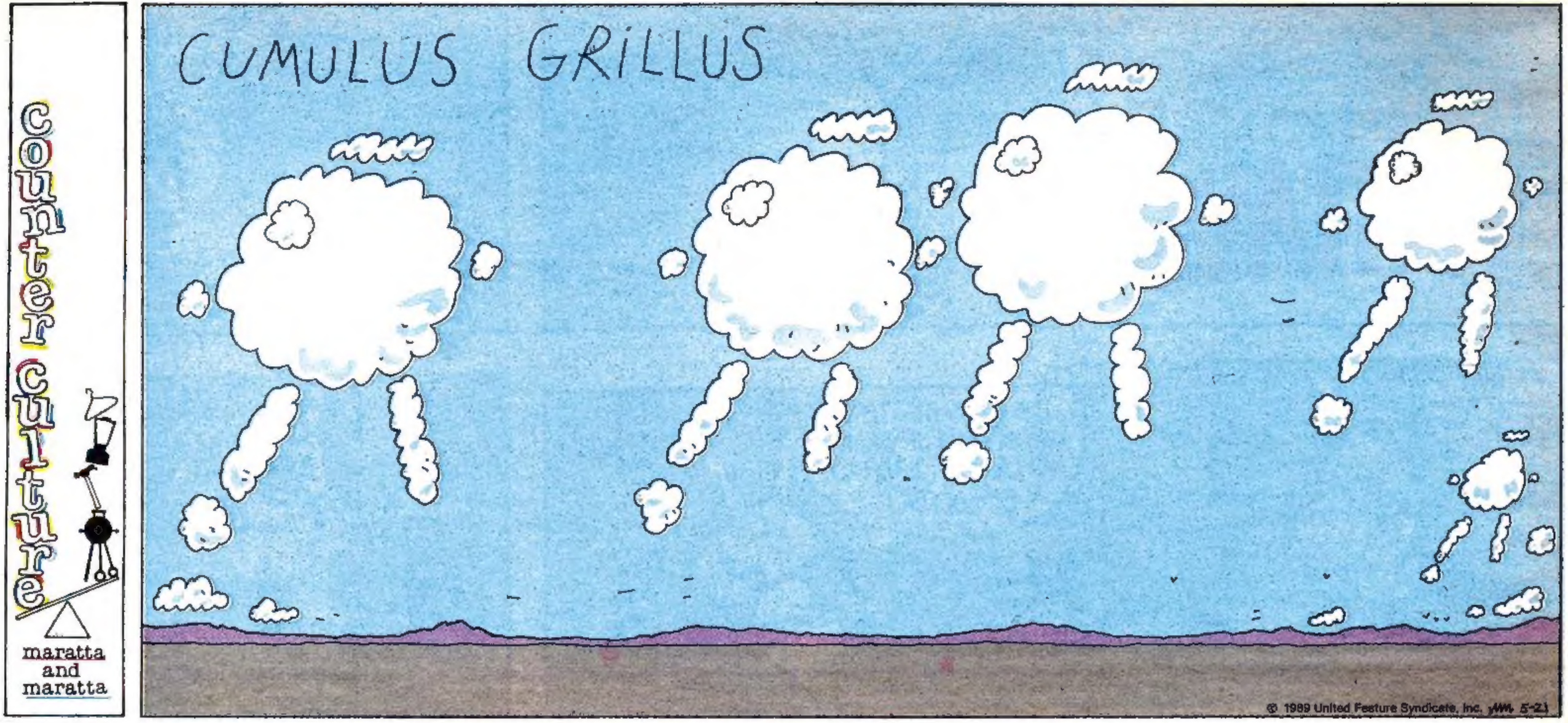
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CUMULUS GRILLUS
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Mr. Toaster brings success to t in cartoonists

Press Staff Report

Kate and Pete Maratta seem to have never grown up, which may be part of the reason for their success in the cartoon world.

"I don't like Mr. Food Processor. It's partly his blade. He should be called Mr. Destructo. And Mr. Microwave is very unlikeable. He's mistrustful because everything he does is invisible," said Kate.

The 36-year-old Maratta twins have teamed up to create Counter Culture, a cartoon comic strip which makes its debut today in the Food section of the Asbury Park Press.

The Counter Culture strip brings to life your kitchen appliances so you can get a glimpse at what they are thinking.

"Everybody knows that appliances have personalities," Kate said. "The stereo doesn't like me. My relationships with the toaster, blender and microwave are different then my husband's. Now we're just getting it down on paper.

"It's such a great idea — technology as our friend," she said. "(And) such an obvious idea."

This obvious idea came from more of a slip of the tongue than brainstorming over the drawing board.

Two and a half years ago, brother and sister were finishing off a conversation on the phone.

When hanging up the phone Pete said, "and Mr. Toaster says good-bye."

Something clicked, and they both started drawing cartoons. The pressure cooker came alive on the drawing board screaming, "I can't take it" and the smoke alarm thought, "Sure is quiet around here . . . too quiet."

Suddenly they found themselves walking through department stores and examining advertisements lil . never before. "Now I look at the Sunday circulars religiously," Pete said. "I look at them and say, 'ooh . . . look at this." I'll walk into the store and look at a mixer. 'It does say mix, chop, grind.' "

When they started drawing cartoons they concentrated their efforts on the toaster, blender and other kitchen appliances. Soon, however, other rooms began to beckon them.

How could they resist the weedwacker and the unused tools in the basement, Pete asked.

"As long as there is technology, there will be something to draw about," Kate explained. "It goes beyond what we can think of — a diaper wipe warmer, an electric tie rack that is actually lighted and marches the ties around the rack."

Kate creates her cartoons out of her Los Angeles home, while Pete works on the strips two thousand miles away in Alexandria, Va. They only see each other two or three times a year.

This, of course, makes working together very difficult and both admit that the miles affect their work.

"Working together always gets us us a joke," Kate said. "Working apart has real disadvantages. After I finish a cartoon I don't see a face. I can't get his reaction."

"I show my husband and if he laughs — good. But

See COUNTER, page C6

COUNTER CULTURE™ by Maratta and Maratta